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ABSTRACT

This paper argues that home activities comprise a valuable unplanned curriculum and that many of these activities can be transferred to the day care center. It is suggested that these activities foster a closer relationship between child and caregiver and bridge the gap between familiar home environment and novel day care setting. Home activities and situations which could be used in the day care center are listed with the emphasis on a need for parent-like involvement from the caregiver. Spanish and English versions of a staff development and training program for using home activities are included. (GO)

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HOME-TYPE ACTIVITIES AT A DAY CARE CENTER

May Aaronson

Educators believe that a normal home provides an unplanned curriculum of activities that helps a child to grow in abilities and social skills. If day care centers would include some home-type activities, different sorts of learning experiences would be added to their programs, a closer relationship would be fostered between the individual child and the caregiver, and the activities would help serve as a bridge between the familiar home environment and the more novel day care setting.

IN THE HOME

Here are some observable elements of the home-type "curriculum."

1. The parent or guardian combines homemaking and child care. The children are involved, and learn to perform duties and to assume responsibilities within their capacities.

2. The different rooms of the home, because they are equipped and used for different purposes, provide a variety of opportunities to learn different skills, concepts, and vocabulary.

3. The children learn much from each other due in part to the differences in their ages. The older ones learn to care for the others, while the younger ones learn new skills by imitating their older brothers and sisters.

4. Parents teach the child language: to listen, to speak, to question, and to understand (and sometimes to read) new words and ideas.

Credit goes to Dr. Doris Aaronson, New York University, and Mrs. Julie Phillips, National Institute of Mental Health, for critical review of this booklet. To be published for Day Care Center use.

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5. Parents teach their children their own social behavior, culture, attitudes, values and beliefs. They set rules and limitations that tend to lead to the child's safety and feelings of security.

6. The parent explains to the children what she does, how things work, and why events occur in the child's daily life. These explanations are important because they help a child to understand his world, to reason clearly, and to feel that the requests made of him are meaningful and reasonable rather than senseless.

7. The parent behaves in a warm and loving manner. She praises the good things and tries to overlook much undesirable behavior, especially if it isn't threatening anyone's safety.

8. The parent builds on a child's sense of human worth by communicating to him a pride in his unique personality and capabilities.

IN THE DAY CARE CENTER

A few home-type activities and situations which would lend themselves to center use are listed here as examples. The caregiver will be able to think of many more. More important, the caregiver should umderstand that the activities in themselves carry little magic unless they are combined with the parent-type involvement described above.

1. Have the children help the caregiver set the table for snack or lunch time. They can help fold napkins, place tableware and drinking cups, and do many other useful things. In the meantime conversation can center around the names and uses of the articles, the best ways to do the job, the foods that will be served and so on. The children can be praised for their efforts and attempts to be helpful.

2. The children can help make lemonade, popsicles, or jello. Or they can be encouraged to squeeze or shape ready-to-bake biscuits according to their fancy, eating their own when they have been baked. The accompanying discussion might be about the ingredients, where they come from, how they're made, what refrigeration and heat do, why some things are eatable and others are not.

3. Have a birthday party or other celebration, with the children helping to prepare refreshments, decorations, and entertainment. All help tidy up afterward. This provides a good opportunity to practice language and social skills.

4. Take a small group marketing to buy food and materials for any of the above-described activities. Spend extra time among the fresh produce or in some other department naming and discussing the products.

5. A trip to the bathroom or laundry room to help the caregiver wash toys or other small articles can be fun and educational. Each child should have a turn, with spills being wiped up with paper towels or sponges. Be prepared to overlook some clumsiness and messiness.

6. The caregiver and a small group of children can explore a specially prepared sewing box together. They can examine and discuss the uses of spools of thread, buttons, hooks, eyes, snaps, clasps, zippers and other sewing paraphernalia. Blunt-tipped needles can be used for stringing bright-colored buttons. The children can be encouraged to describe colors, zes, shapes, and to count the number of holes in the buttons. If possible, lp each one to sew a stitch or two through material to participate in an actual sewing experience.

7. The children can "write" letters to their parents by scribbling, drawing, or pasting pictures. After envelopes have been addressed, stamped

and sealed, all can take a walk to drop their letters into the mail box. This activity combines the development of an experience with a contact to the parents.

8. On a cold or rainy day the caregiver and a few children can make a game of naming and describing everything they can see through the window. This is a good way to sharpen powers of observation and to practice language.

9. By varying the ages in a group, the children will have an opportunity to practice natural family roles. The older children can help the others, while the younger ones can learn new skills by imitating the older ones. Each can be provided with special opportunities according to his age and abilities.

10. The caregiver should devote some time to listening and responding with interest and sympathy to what a child has to say about himself, his family and friends, his home, his hopes, his needs and his wishes. Some children chatter freely about everything. Others need to be encouraged to express themselves. The caregiver can encourage a shy or uncommunicative child by asking a few non-threatening questions at an appropriate time; such as, what toys does he like, what foods or sweets does he enjoy, what kinds of play does he prefer. When she has gained his confidence and he has become more relaxed, he may share more personal matters. His confidences should be kept private and he should be respected as a person. The caregiver's reward will be the development of a warm home-type relationship between her and the child.

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PROGRAMA PARA EL DESARROLLO Y LA ENSEÑANZA DE LOS AYUDANTES
PROGRAMA PRE-ESCOLAR PARA LOS NIÑOS MIGRANTES DE MONTANA

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAM
MONTANA PRESCHOOL PROGRAM FOR MIGRANT CHILDREN

TIPOS DE ACTIVIDADES DEL HOGAR EN EL CENTRO DE CUIDADO DIARIO

HOME-TYPE ACTIVITIES AT THE DAY CARE CENTER

Por/By May Aaronson and
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Pruebe Lo Que Ud. Sabe

¿Cuánto Ud. ya sabe acerca de usar tipos de actividades del hogar en el centro de cuidado diario? Lea cada una de las siguientes oraciones. Si Ud. piensa que la oración es verdadera, escriba una "V" al final de la oración. Si la oración es falsa, escríbala de nuevo para hacerla verdadera:

1. Agregando tipos de actividades del hogar a su programa de cuidado diario ayuda a Ud. a ser más íntimo con los niños.

   _____

2. En el hogar, los niños aprenden a tener muchas tareas y responsabilidades.

   _____

3. Los niños no aprenden de cada uno en el hogar.

   _____

4. Hay muchos tipos de actividades del hogar que Ud. puede usar con éxito en su centro.

   _____

5. Los niños no gozarán ayudándole a Ud. a cocinar o a poner la mesa de almuerzo.

   _____

(Respuestas correctas en la página 5)

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Tipos De Actividades Del Hogar En El Centro De Cuidado Diario

Cuando el niño viene al centro de cuidado diario, él trae con él un conocimiento de cosas que él ha aprendido en el hogar. En muchos casos, sus padres no le enseñaron formalmente estas cosas. Más bien, él las aprendió por si mismo. Por este programa de actividades del hogar no planeadas, el niño aprende como hacer cosas y como llevarse bien con los miembros de su familia.

Le sorprenderá a Ud. saber que los tipos de actividades del hogar pueden ser usados en el centro de cuidado diario. Cuando los niños participan en actividades que les recuerdan de sus hogares, ellos se sentirán más cómodos de estar en el centro de cuidado diario. Estas actividades pueden hacer más fácil su adaptación a sus nuevos alrededores.

Lo Que Los Niños Aprenden En El Hogar

Los niños aprenden muchas cosas diferentes en el hogar al ellos mirar a sus padres hacer las tareas y al ellos ayudar en su propia manera pequeña. Muchos de los niños en su cuidado podrán tener sus propias tareas de casa que hacer como hacer sus propias camas, y ayudar a poner y limpiar la mesa para la comida. Al ayudar a sus padres con las tareas, ellos aprenden que diferentes actividades ocurren en cada cuarto de la casa. Por ejemplo, cosas diferentes se hacen en la cocina de las que se hacen en el baño o el dormitorio. Cuando los niños crecen, ellos aprenden nuevas habilidades asociadas con cada cuarto. En la cocina, ellos aprenden a ayudar a sus padres a cocinar y poner la mesa. En el dormitorio, ellos aprenden a limpiarse los dientes y lavarse las manos y cara. Cuando el niño aprende estas habilidades, él también empieza a comprender un número más de palabras y conceptos. Cuando la madre del niño le muestra a él como poner los platos de la comida en la mesa, por ejemplo, él no sólo aprende como poner la mesa. El

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también aprende el significado de la palabra en. Sólo por escuchar, hablar con, y preguntar a sus padres, el niño mejora sus habilidades de lenguaje. Cuando el vínculo de la comunicación entre el padre y su hijo esta basado en el amor, el niño probablemente aprende muchas palabras y conceptos nuevos de sus padres.

La extensión del aprendizaje de un niño no está limitada a un lenguaje. Los padres también explican a su niño lo que las cosas son, como las cosas funcionan y por qué eventos suceden. Estas explicaciones son importantes porque ellas ayudan a un niño a comprender el mundo alrededor de él y a razonar claramente.

Las interacciones diarias que un niño tiene con sus padres también le enseñan reglas importantes que él debe seguir para llevarse bien con otros. Un padre le puede enseñar al niño como llevarse bien con otros al alabar las buenas cosas que él hace y al corregir las malas cosas. Los padres deben estar seguros de dejar saber a su niño que ellos lo quieren, aunque lo estén regañando. Cuando el niño está seguro del conocimiento de que sus padres lo quieren, él querrá actuar de una manera que les gustará a ellos.

Cuando un niño está en casa, él no sólo aprende de sus padres, él también aprende muchas cosas de sus hermanos y hermanas mayores. Es común para un niño admirar mucho a sus hermanos o hermanas mayores, e imitar muchas de las cosas que ellos hacen. Al imitarse a cada uno, los niños aprender nuevas habilidades. A menudo ellos están tan absorbidos en tratar de imitarse que ellos ni están conscientes de las nuevas habilidades que están aprendiendo.

Hay varios puntos importantes que Ud. debe recordar para hacer que las actividades en que los niños participan en el hogar sean experiencias de aprendizaje valoriosas. Primero, los niños no deben sentirse apresurados a aprender. Las actividades en que ellos participan ocurren naturalmente durante el día. Por eso, los niños pueden tomar cada actividad tranquilamente. Segundo, los niños asocian lo que están haciendo con el amor que ellos sienten hacia sus padres. Esto los provee con una actitud positiva hacia el aprendizaje.

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En El Centro De Cuidado Diario

Varios tipos de actividades del hogar se pueden llevar al centro. Este folleto le dará a Ud. algunas ideas y Ud. probablemente podrá pensar de muchas otras. Idealmente, el niño debe sentirse positivamente acerca de los tipos de actividades del hogar que él hace con Ud. en el centro como él se siente acerca de las actividades que ocurren en su casa con sus padres. Es decir, Ud. debe tratar de darle al niño el mismo sentimiento de amor y seguridad que él recibe de sus padres.

Un tipo de actividad de hogar que el fácil hacer en el centro es hacer que los niños le ayuden a poner la mesa para la hora de la merienda y el almuerzo. Ud. les puede enseñar como doblar las servilletas, poner las cucharas, los tenedores y tazas de papel en ela mesa, y hacer otras cosas útiles. Mientras que los niños están poniendo la mesa, anímelos a hablar acerca de los nombres y usos de los platos, vasos, cuchillos, tenedores y cucharas. Ud. también puede hablar acerca de las diferentes maneras de poner la mesa y como servir la comida. Recuerde alabarlos por haberle ayudado a Ud. Esto les hará sentir que ellos han hecho una buena tarea.

Otro tipo de actividad del hogar, que los niños amarán, es permitirles a ellos a ayudarle a Ud. a hacer limonada, paletas o gelatina. Ud. también les puede enseñar como apretar o batir para cocinar la masa del bizcocho en diferentes formas. Luego que los bizcochos se han cocinado, cada niño puede comer el bizcocho que ha hecho. Mientras que los niños le están ayudando a Ud. a "cocinar", Ud. puede hablar acerca de los ingredientes, de donde vienen, y como se hacen. Los niños también pueden aprender acerca de "frio" y "caliente", y que le pasa a ciertos alimentos cuando ellos son calentados o enfriados.

Aquí hay otra situación que puede ser llevada del hogar al centro de cuidado diario. Si es posible, lleve un grupo pequeño de niños a una tienda de alimentos a comprar ingredientes para sus actividades de "cocina". Pase tiempo yendo a las

diferentes áreas de la tienda y discuta con los niños los nombres de los diferentes alimentos. Pregúnteles si ellos pueden describir el sabor de los alimentos o si ellos saben de donde vienen dichos alimentos. De esta manera, ellos aprenderán nuevas palabras, como se usa el dinero para comprar cosas y sobre las diferentes actividades que ocurren en la tienda. Ud. también los puede ayudar a descubrir que la leche viene de una vaca y que las naranjas crecen en un árbol. Otra idea es explorar, con un grupo pequeño de niños, una caja de coser especialmente preparada. Ud. puede incluir en la caja botones de diferentes tamaños y colores, grandes agujas desafiladas, carretos de hilo, un par de tijeras desafiladas, cierres, corchetes y corchetas y otras cosas de coser. Discuta con los niños los nombres y los usos de las diferentes piezas del equipo de coser. Anímelos a describir el color, el tamaño y la forma de cada uno. Pídales que cuenten el número de huecos en el botón. Ud. les puede mostrar como enhilar cuentas brillantemente coloreadas con una aguja e hilo. Si es posible, ayude a cada niño a coser un punto o dos por un pedazo de material. Ellos probablemente se excitarán acerca de esta experiencia porque están haciendo algo que ellos probablemente han visto a la madre hacer muchas veces en el hogar.

Aquí hay otra sugerencia. Cuando haya calor, lleve a los niños afuera para una limpieza del patio. Ud. puede darles a algunos de los niños rastrillos pequeños para que junten hojas caídas o pedazos de papel. Cuando el patio esté limpio, los niños le pueden ver a Ud. poner el rociador para regar la yerba. Al hacer esto, expliqueles que la yerba, los árboles y las flores necesitan agua para crecer. Dígales que a estas cosas vivas les da "sed" igual que a las personas. Mediante discusiones como ésta, Ud. puede ayudar a los niños a aprender acerca de las cosas que ven a su alrededor. Estos son solamente algunos de los muchos tipos de actividades del hogar que Ud. puede usar para ayudar a los niños aprender acerca de su mundo. Porque estas actividades son familiares a los niños, ellos deben sentirse cómodos haciéndolas. Apenas estén relajados, ellos querrán aprender y acercarse a Ud.

Respuestas a Pruebe Lo Que Ud. Sabe en la Pagina 1:
(1)V; (2)V; (3)F; (4)V; (5)F

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Test What You Know

How much do you already know about using home type-activities in the day care center? Read each of the following statements. If you think the statement is true, write T at the end of the statement. If the statement is false, rewrite the sentence to make it a true statement:

1. Adding home-type activities to your day care program helps bring you closer to the children.

   _____

2. At home, the children learn to take care of many chores and responsibilities.

   _____

3. Children do not learn from each other at home.

   _____

4. There are many home-type activities that you can successfully use in your center.

   _____

5. The children will not enjoy helping you cook and set the lunch table.

   _____

(Correct Answers on Page 10)

Home-Type Activities At the Day Care Center

When a child comes to the day care center, he brings with him a knowledge of things that he's learned at home. In many cases, his parents did not formally teach him these things. Rather, he learned them just by being with and watching his parents, and by trying out new activities himself. Through this unplanned program of home activities, the child learns how to do things and how to get along with the members of his family.

It may surprise you to find out that home-type activities can also be used in the day care center. When the children take part in activities that remind them of their homes, they will feel more comfortable about being at the day care center. These activities can make their adjustment to their new surroundings a lot easier.

What Children Learn At Home

Children learn many different things at home as they watch their parents do the chores and as they help in their own small way. Many of the children in your care may have their own home chores to do like making their own bed, and helping to set and clean up the dinner table. As they help their parents with the chores, they learn that different activities take place in each room of the house. For example, different things are done in the kitchen than are done in the bathroom or bedroom. As the children grow older, they learn new skills associated with each room. In the kitchen, they learn to help their parents cook and set the table. In the bedroom, they learn to fold their clothes and put them away. And in the bathroom, they learn to brush their teeth and wash their hands and face.

As a child learns these skills, he also begins to understand an increasing number of words and concepts. When a child's mother shows him how to put the dinner plates on the table, for example, he not only learns how to set the table. He also learns the meaning of the word on. Just by listening to, talking with, and

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questioning his parents, a child improves his language skills. When the bond of communication between a parent and his child is based on love, the child is likely to learn many new words and concepts from his parents.

The scope of the child's learning is not limited to language. Parents also explain to their child what things are, how things work, and why events happen. These explanations are important because they help a child understand the world around him and to reason clearly.

The everyday interactions that a child has with his parents also teach him important rules that he must follow in order to get along with others. A parent can teach his child how to get along with others by praising the good things that he does, and by correcting the bad things. Parents must be sure to always let their child know that they love him, even when they are scolding him. When a child is secure in the knowledge that his parents love him, he will want to act in a way that pleases them.

When a child is at home, he not only learns from his parents, he also learns many things from his older brothers and sisters. It is common for a young child to admire his older brothers or sisters very much and imitate many of the things that they do. By imitating one another, children learn new skills. They often are so involved in trying to be like one another that they are unaware of the new skills that they are learning.

There are several important points you should remember that make the activities that the children take part in at home such valuable learning experiences. First, the children do not feel pressured to learn. The activities in which they take part occur naturally throughout the day. Because of this, the children can take each activity in stride. Second, the children associate what they are doing with the love that they feel toward their parents. This provides them with a positive attitude toward learning.

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At the Day Care Center

Several home-type activities can be carried over into the center. This booklet will give you some ideas, and you will probably be able to think of many others. Ideally, a child should feel as positively about the home-type activities that he does with you at the center as he feels about the activities that take place in his home with his parents. In essence, you should try to give a child the same feeling of love and security that he receives from his parents.

One home-type activity that is easy to do at the center is to have the children help you set the table for snacktime or lunchtime. You can teach them how to fold napkins, put spoons, forks, and paper cups on the table, and do other useful things. While the children are setting the table, encourage them to talk about the names and uses of the dishes, glassware, knives, forks, and spoons. You can also talk about different ways to set the table and how to serve the food. Remember to praise them for helping out. This will make them feel that they have done a good job.

Another home-type activity, that the children will love, is to allow them to help you make lemonade, popsicles, or jello. You can also show them how to squeeze or pat ready-to-bake biscuit dough into different shapes. Then after the biscuits have been baked, each child can eat the biscuit he made. While the children are helping you "cook," you can talk about the ingredients, where they come from, and how they are made. The children can also learn about "cold" and "hot," and what happens to different foods when they are heated or cooled.

Here is another situation that can be carried over from the home into the day care center. If possible, take a small group of children to a food store to buy ingredients for their "cooking" activities. Spend time going to different areas of the store and discussing with the children the names of different foods. Ask the children if they can describe the tastes of the foods, or if they know where the foods come from. In this way, they will learn new words, how money is used to buy

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things, and about the different activities that take place in a store. You can also help them discover that milk comes from a cow and that oranges grow on a tree.

Another idea is to explore, with a small group of the children, a specially prepared sewing box. You can include in the box buttons of different sizes and colors, large blunt needles, spools of thread, a pair of blunt-ended scissors, zippers, hooks and eyes, and other sewing things. Discuss with the children the names and uses of the different pieces of sewing equipment. Encourage them to describe the color, size, and shape of each. Ask them to count the number of holes in a button. You can show them how to string brightly-colored beads with a needle and thread. If possible, help each child to sew a stitch or two through a piece of material. The children will probably become very excited about this experience because they are doing something that they have probably seen mother do many times at home.

Here is another suggestion. When the weather is warm take the children outside for a backyard clean-up. You can give some of the children small rakes so they can gather together any fallen leaves or scraps of paper. When the yard is clean, the children can watch you set up the sprinkler to water the grass. As you do this, explain to the children that the grass, trees, and flowers need water if they are to grow. Tell the children that these living things get "thirsty" in the same way that people do. Through discussions like this, you can help the children learn about the things that they see around them.

These are just a few of the many home-type activities that you can use to help the children learn about their world. Because these activities are familiar to the children, they should feel comfortable about doing them. Once the children are relaxed, they will want to learn and they will want to become close to you.

Answers to Test What You Know on Page 6:

(1) T; (2) T; (3) F; (4) T; (5) F

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